

VZCZCXRO6247
PP RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHFR #2306/01 0971529
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 071529Z APR 06
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 5941
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0780
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY 1586
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6088
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 1292
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0707
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 002306

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/01/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [FR](#) [EUN](#) [GE](#) [PL](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: POLISH EMBASSY ON FRANCO-POLISH AND FRANCO-GERMAN
RELATIONS

REF: A. 05 PARIS 1617

[1](#)B. PARIS 2252

Classified By: PolMC Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (B & D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Polish Embassy PolCouns described for us April 6 an improving Franco-Polish relationship and growing French interest in the Weimar triangle grouping of France, Germany and Poland. She attributed growing French activism to attempts to offset its waning influence both vis-a-vis Germany and within an enlarged EU. Germany's increasing importance, she suggested, had led to a rockier Franco-German relationship, owing mainly to France's reluctance to give up its former, privileged role. Raciborska discerned more positive French engagement on Belarus and Ukraine, while acknowledging French reluctance to irk the Russians. She noted an increased Polish contribution to the Franco-German EU mission to the DRC as testimony to the new vitality of the Weimar arrangement. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Deputy PolCouns met April 6 with Polish PolCouns Lidia Raciborska for a tour d'horizon that touched on the various legs of the Weimar triangle grouping of France, Germany and Poland, in addition to French internal political developments and Franco-U.S. relations. We report them here for what they are worth.

[1](#)3. (C) Raciborska affirmed that the positive evolution in Franco-Polish relations, loudly trumpeted by the French press when France and Poland combined forces during the EU budget negotiations of last December, was not a new development (see also ref A). Notwithstanding Chirac's (in)famous February 2003 complaint that the then-EU candidate states had missed an opportunity to remain silent on Iraq, France, she continued, had already begun to improve its relations with the new EU member states from Central and Eastern Europe well before the May 29 referendum on the EU constitutional treaty (ref A). Raciborska judged that French efforts had taken on new urgency since the election of Angela Merkel as the German chancellor. According to Raciborska, France, as opposed to Poland in the past, was now the main proponent of a strengthened Weimar triangle grouping.

[1](#)4. (C) Deputy PolCouns, noting that France was Poland's top foreign investor, asked what additional factors motivated France's growing interest. Raciborska responded that French activism reflected France's decreasing influence within an enlarged EU as well as a concern that it needed to make more efforts to offset growing German influence. Moreover, Merkel had made clear that Germany itself would be placing more emphasis on better relations with new member states and no

longer would focus as exclusively on its relationship with France. Raciborska claimed, based on her discussions with German counterparts, that, notwithstanding French claims to the contrary and the existence of an extremely dense network of Franco-German institution building and cooperation, that the bilateral relationship was increasingly beset by tensions and disagreements. Deputy PolCouns asked if she saw the problems more as ones of method or something else. Raciborska responded that the Germans were increasingly insisting on being treated as a full equal, whereas the French continued to act as if nothing had changed since the days when France furnished the political, and Germany the economic, power of the tandem.

15. (C) Asked in what ways the Franco-Polish relationship was improving, Raciborska cited French interest in cooperation on energy security and growing French involvement in EU policy toward eastern Europe. This was particularly true for Belarus and Ukraine. That said, she noted -- echoing EUR A/S Dan Fried's latest round of meetings with French officials (ref B) -- that the GOF remained reluctant to take positions that might irritate the Russians. She claimed that French officials in almost every meeting warned against "waking the sleeping Russian bear." (We commented that the French surely could not have failed to notice that the bear was already awake.) The second major difference, Raciborska adduced, was that the French no longer complained about Iraq.

16. (C) Raciborska used the occasion of the meeting to inform us that the Polish government had just decided to increase its contribution to the EU mission to the DRC (led by the Germans with French support) from thirty to one hundred. This had greatly pleased President Chirac, she said, and was testimony to the vitality of the Weimar arrangement.

PARIS 00002306 002 OF 002

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

Stapleton